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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

July 14, 1969

UNCLASSIFIEDNational Security Study Memorandum 69

TO: The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: U.S. Nuclear Policy in Asia

The President has directed the preparation of a study on U.S. nuclear policy in Asia.

The study should examine four broad areas:

1. U.S. strategic nuclear capability against China. A range of possible situations in which a U.S. strategic nuclear capability against China would be useful should be examined. The study should consider possible target systems in China and U.S. capability to attack those systems. The implications for U.S. strategic force requirements, for war planning and the required command and control systems and procedures and for the definition of strategic sufficiency should be examined.

2. U.S. theater nuclear capability in the Pacific. The study should examine the role of the U.S. theater nuclear capability in the Pacific for both deterrence and defense against possible Chinese attacks and against other forms of aggression against both Allied and non-Allied countries. Under what types of circumstances and how might U.S. theater nuclear forces be employed in improving war outcomes? The study should examine alternative postures and basing arrangements for theater nuclear forces in the light of possible roles for U.S. strategic forces, taking account inter alia of the pending reversion of Okinawa to Japan.

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by D. Van Tassel, National Security Council


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3. Nuclear assurances. The study should analyze the current legal and political status of our commitments, both to Allied and non-Allied countries, concerning our actions in the face of nuclear aggression or threats of aggression. This should take into account our obligations under the UN Charter; our various alliances; the Non-Proliferation Treaty (including the Security Council Resolution and Senate testimony), and statements by US officials. In the light of the results obtained under paragraphs 1 and 2 above, possible modifications to our assurances should be discussed and evaluated.

4. Nuclear proliferation. The paper should consider for each option examined the possible effects on proliferation of nuclear weapons and on prospects for wider adherence to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

This study should be performed by an Interagency Group chaired by a representative of the Secretary of Defense and including representatives of the addressees of this memorandum and of the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. A representative of the Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency should participate in the Nuclear Assurances and Nuclear Proliferation phases of the study. This study should be submitted to the NSC Review Group by 30 September 1969.


Henry A. Kissinger

cc: The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director, Arms Control and
Disarmament Agency

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